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the sound of English *sh*. This older sound is kept in Asturian and Galician (see *Modern Philology*, vol. 4, p. 279, October, 1906); also in E. *sherry* and French *Quichotte Chimène*, from *Xerez Quixote Ximena*, now written *Jerez Quijote Jimena*.

As English *a* was like Spanish *a* until the sixteenth century, there would have then been no great difference between *rasher* and the etymon *raja*, aside from the endings. Since native words do not have the ending *a* in modern English, it is not strange that the final vowel should have become *er*. Vulgar English nowadays often avoids final *a* (ə) by giving it the sound of *er* or of *y*: *extrýdear*. If any further explanation of the added *r* is needed, it may be found in the phonetic development of *bridegroom philosopher participle syllable*, French *perdrix esclandre*, Italian *balestra scheletro*, Spanish *estrella rastrillo*: namely, the tendency to insert *l* or *r* in a word already containing one of these two sounds.

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VOLTAIRE AND DUMAS.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—The plot in fiction seems to be increasing every day, as the mass of studies in comparative literature grows. A striking example of this fact is evident when we make a *rapprochement* of two scenes in fiction, one taken from Voltaire's "Ingénu," the other from Dumas' "Monte-Cristo."

The Ingénu, an unsophisticated Indian, has been imprisoned in the Bastille for no fault of his own. There he meets an old Jansenist who welcomes him with open arms. Then follows an account of the education of the Indian by the Jansenist. The pupil quickly learns all that the Jansenist has to teach him of literature, history, and philosophy, and surprises his teacher by the brilliancy of his intellect. In return for the Jansenist's good services, the Ingénu solaces him for his misfortunes by the love and reverence he bestows upon the old man.

Compare this situation with the major portion

of the Château d'If (the first part of Monte-Cristo). Edmond Dantès is unjustly cast into prison, and there meets the wise Abbé Faria. Edmond, like the Ingénu, is a simple, ignorant fellow, but under the tutelage of the Abbé Faria he makes marvellous progress in the study of history, philosophy, and science.

Except for the didacticism in the story of Voltaire, the episodes are almost identical in the characterization of the personages, in the situations, and in many of the ideas developed. Dumas undoubtedly knew his Voltaire: did he borrow his scene from the "Ingénu"?

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DANCE MACABRE.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—The etymology of the word *Macabre*, in the phrase *Dance Macabre*, has long been disputed; the *Oxford English Dictionary* sanctions only the possible corruption of *Maccabæus*, from the Macabees, heroes and martyrs of Christian legend. The late Gaston Paris, in a note printed *Romania*, 24, 130, suggested that Le Fèvre, whose allusion "Je fis de macabre la dance" dates from 1376, may have been referring to his verse by the name of the painter whose work he used; he adds "Il est donc très possible qu'un Français du xivme siècle se soit appelé Macabre."

May I say that in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ix, p. 672, I find, in a list of French clergy paying homage to Henry V, the name of a capellanus of Reville, Laurentius Machabre, and that the cleric who heads this body of parochial clergy is capellanus "de Dez Innocens." As the fresco of the *Dance Macabre*, the verses of which Lydgate translated into English, was painted in 1424 in the Church of the Innocents at Paris, the collocation is suggestive. The submission of the clergy above mentioned was made in 1419, forty years later than Le Fèvre; but the confirmation of one part of Paris' suggestion raises interesting possibilities concerning the rest of it.

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